REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance.

Amended claim 1 corrects a misspelling. This trivial editorial amendment should be entered and will not make any estoppel.

Claims 1 and 4-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,025,286. The Examiner's thesis is that the reference "uses the same materials as the current invention" and therefore "the prior art ... possesses the claimed prospectus (i.e., tensile strength, a value of T-H greater than or equal to 0.150)."

The Examiner should reconsider the reference, the conclusion reached, and thereafter allow this application.

First, there is no passage in the reference that expressly or necessarily, inherently discloses the present claimed invention. The Examiner has not cited such a passage. (Otherwise, the Examiner is urged to submit his Declaration.)

Second, the Examiner should carefully review Comparative Example 1 in the Kawatsu reference. It will be seen that the inherency argument founders.

Comparative Example 1 meets the properties according to the Kawatsu reference. The Examiner should review Table 1, page 20, in the specification versus Kawatsu at column 3, lines 63-67 (film thickness of 0.1 to 5μm); column 4, lines 5-8 (average files diameter of 0.5 to 20 μm); and column 4, lines 14-17 (basis weight of fibers of 1 to 20 g/m^2, preferably 3 to 14 g/m^2). Notwithstanding this commonality, the Comparative Example 1 product creased on the drum as seen from Table 1, page 21, herein.

Therefore, Applicants have demonstrated that the prior art does not teach the use of the same materials, because it does not possess the claimed properties (i.e., tensile strength; a value of T-H greater than 0.150), and crease-free/crease-resistant on the drum).

Third, it is an error to confuse the properties in Kawatsu, including fiber orientation, with the residual torque (T-H of at least about 0.150). The orientation parameters have nothing to do with the residual torque (T-H); the former is required to improve performation sensitivity and printability as described in Kawatsu et al. (particularly Table 2), whereas the latter is required to avoid creasing of the stencil sheet on the printing drum.

Fourth, it is generally considered that the greater the orientation parameter (R2) of the fibers of the porous substrate, the greater the tensile strength of the stencil sheet becomes, and the stencil sheet seems to be improved in runnability as shown in Table 2 of Kawatsu et al. However, this does not necessarily have any effect on the claimed residual torque (T-H). For example, the stencil sheet of Comparative Example 1of the present specification has a tensile strength of 0.38 kgf/cm which is equivalent to or greater than the stencil sheets of Examples 2 and 3 of the present specification, as shown in page 20, Table 1 of the present specification. However, the Comparative Example 1 shows a residual torque (T-H) considerably lower than the stencil sheets of the Examples 2 and 3, as shown in page 21, Table 1 of the present specification. This proves that creasing on drum is not inherently, necessarily improved by a greater orientation parameter (R2) or a greater stencil strength. It is thought that the residual torque would be influenced by the interlaced state of the fibers of the porous substrate rather than the state of single fibers such as the orientation parameter (R2). It is therefore apparent that the present invention is not anticipated by Kawatsu et al., nor would it have been obvious over the same.

Conclusion

Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance, and notice of same is requested together with an initialed/dated PTO-1449 form acknowledging the July 23, 2001 IDS. If the Examiner has any questions, please contact the undersigned at (202) 419-7000 **(new)**.

Respectfully submitted,
FITCH, EVEN, TABIN & FLANNERY

By: _____
Kendrew H. Colton
Registration No. 30,368
Telephone No. (202) 419-7000
Facsimile No. (202) 419-7007

New Local Address
Fitch, Even, Tabin & Flannery
1801 K Street, N.W.
Suite 401L
Washington, D.C. 20006-1201
Telephone No. (202) 419-7000
Facsimile No. (202) 419-7007

APPENDIX

CLAIMS AS AMENDED IN RESPONSE TO THE OFFICIAL ACTION MAILED MARCH 27, 2001

1. A heat-sensitive stencil sheet, which comprises a laminate of a thermoplastic resin film and a porous substrate mainly composed of synthetic fibers, said stencil sheet satisfying $0.150 \leq T\text{-}H$ wherein T means and arithmetic ~~avarage~~ average value (g · cm/cm) of absolute values of KES bending torque in lengthwise direction of the stencil sheet at curvatures of +2.3 and -2.3 (cm^{-1}), H means a bending hysteresis (g · cm/cm), and T-H means a residual torque (g · cm/cm).

PENDING CLAIMS

1. A heat-sensitive stencil sheet, which comprises a laminate of a thermoplastic resin film and a porous substrate mainly composed of synthetic fibers, said stencil sheet satisfying $0.150 \leq T-H$ wherein T means and arithmetic average value (g · cm/cm) of absolute values of KES bending torque in lengthwise direction of the stencil sheet at curvatures of +2.3 and -2.3 (cm^{-1}), H means a bending hysteresis (g · cm/cm), and T-H means a residual torque (g · cm/cm).

4. A heat-sensitive stencil sheet according to claim 1, wherein said heat-sensitive stencil sheets has a KES bending rigidity value B per unit length of 0.02 gf cm^2/cm or more.

5. A heat-sensitive stencil sheet according to claim 4, wherein said value B is in a cross-wise direction with respect to said heat-sensitive stencil sheet.

6. A heat-sensitive stencil sheet according to claim 4, wherein said value B is in the length wise direction of said heat-sensitive stencil sheet.

7. A heat-sensitive stencil sheet according to claim 1, wherein the tensile strength in the lengthwise direction is 0.3 kgf/cm or more.

8. A heat-sensitive stencil sheet according to claim 4, wherein the tensile strength in the lengthwise direction is 0.3 kgf/cm or more.